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Portland, OR 97220

August 19, 2016

U.S. EPA  
ATTN: Harbor Comments  
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Portland, OR 97205

The city of Portland has promised to fix the Willamette River's pollution for years. The EPA's Superfund plan to spend years and millions, maybe even a billion dollars or more, to dredge contaminated sediment from the river is not the solution that we have been waiting for to correct a polluted river. I am a retired citizen who has lived in Portland for the last sixty-nine years, and I believe that the EPA and Portland need to listen to what local people have to say about this costly and unrealistic plan to treat this section of the Willamette River.

The EPA plans to dredge contaminated sediment from the bottom of the river and transport it to landfills. This plan, using data collected in 2004 and 2008, ignores more recent 2014 data that shows that natural restoration of the river has reduced contaminants by at least 40%. The EPA's invasive plan could undo all of this natural progress and would probably make the situation worse. In this case, the EPA should explore other solutions instead of moving immediately to dredging. My son works for the Army Corps of Engineers, and I know this agency recommends that projects like this should start with less aggressive methods and resort to dredging only when all else fails. Furthermore, the EPA's estimates for the plan's execution and results are entirely unrealistic. The EPA thinks that it can complete this project in seven years by dredging twenty-four hours a day, six days a week. I do not believe that the project can be accomplished in such a time frame. That sort of non-stop dredging has never been done by any other operation. Realistically, this project could take much longer, maybe even more than thirty years. Dredging the river for so long is ridiculous. If it is going to take so long, there must be another way. The EPA's projected cost for this project - \$746 million - is both too high and unrealistic. The project could take more time and money than what has been estimated, and there must be other ways to clean the river that aren't so costly.

The EPA and the city of Portland need to find a better solution to the Willamette River's situation. This river is already on its way to recovery, and we should not risk doing more damage with an aggressive and unproven plan. We need a plan that will cost much less and not turn the Willamette into a construction zone for decades to come.

Sincerely,

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